

GUIDE

formerly TECHNIQUES *for Convert Makers*

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONVERT WORK

A report on the second national convention in Washington to extend and improve on apostolate to non-Catholics.

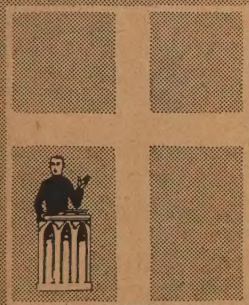
TOWARDS ORGANIZING THE CONVERT APOSTOLATE

How can we mobilize the full strength of American Catholicism in the cause of Christ's other sheep?

John T. McGinn, C.S.P.

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DECEMBER 1959, No. 143



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IT SEEMS TO ME

As Others See Us

"We should form the life of the parish in such a way that it does not annoy or repel non-Catholics. It should, rather, interest and attract them." So speaks a contributor to that excellent book "The Parish: from Theology to Practice" which Father Hugo Rahner, S.J., recently edited.

The Church herself is the Bride of Christ, a loving mother tenderly eager to serve the deepest needs of all men. She is holy with the sanctity of her Spouse. She proclaims and safeguards the basic liberty of men. And she is Catholic in her approval of everything fundamentally good, in nature as well as in the supernatural.

But this image is horribly distorted in the minds and imagination of numerous non-Catholics. To many a pious Protestant, the Church is unholy. Many a thoughtful man thinks she is a power structure bent on worldly ambition. A pressure group unsympathetic to democratic ideals. A carping, unco-operative, negative body forever crusading against something. Even amongst the friendliest of inquirers we frequently find more than a trace of these misgivings.

The tragedy is that this caricature is created not merely by the POAU, the bigots or the Blanshards. This unflattering and totally false picture is one for which some Catholics are partly responsible. The scandalous, mediocre or superficial Catholic paints it. The chip-on-the-shoulder apostle lends a hand. And those who identify the Church with un-Christian intolerance, re-action or anti-intellectualism help to cloud the true features of their mother.

It seems rather pointless for some Catholics to undertake the labor of attracting inquirers, while others, frequently with the best of intentions, so often misrepresent the Church. "Attitudes Among Catholics that Disturb non-Catholics." Someone suggested this topic for discussion groups interested in the Apostolate of Good Will. It's also an excellent subject for a private examination of conscience; a retreat conference to nuns, seminarians, priests and laity; and for numerous Sunday sermons in an apostolic parish.

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

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National Conference on Convert Work

By John T. McGinn, C.S.P.

What are the prospects for conversion in the United States? How will the coming Ecumenical Council affect the Apostolate to non-Catholics? Is there justification for a reappraisal of the content and method of presenting the catechism to inquirers? How can we utilize more effectively the talents of the laity? What types of people are coming to the Church? How can we interest priests in the conversion of our neighbors?

Questions like these were thoroughly aired at the Conference on Convert Work held from October 20th to 22nd at St. Paul's College, the major seminary of the Paulist Fathers, at the Catholic University in Washington, D. C. A similar conference meeting under the auspices of the Paulists last year proved so helpful that it was unanimously agreed to hold this convention in 1959.

Some 120 priests, representing dioceses throughout the United States and Canada and 20 religious orders, gathered for the sessions. They constituted a cross section of the priests who have distinguished themselves in the apostolate to our Separated Brethren. A batch of letters from those who attended point to the zeal, priestliness and professional competence of the delegates. They came strictly for business, and in the public sessions as well as in private discussions exchanged views and approaches regarding the numerous details of a growing apostolate. "It was a most profitable and enjoyable experience" wrote one guest. "It stirred me like a good retreat."

A note of encouragement was voiced by the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi, principal after-dinner speaker at the conference. "Returning to America after an absence of some years," said the Archbishop, "one cannot escape the fact that

moral standards have lowered. Yet many of our neighbors do lead lives of admirable virtue according to their best lights, and while outside the true fold they are often close to the Kingdom of God.

"How are we to win them? We certainly must utilize all modern techniques of communication including press, radio, television and movies. But it must always be remembered that techniques, however important, are not the ultimate answer. God really draws converts. So make certain of your own sanctity and then your Christ-like holiness will sanctify others. Your apostolate must be animated by Christian charity toward your neighbor down the street."

THE ACCESSIBLE PRIEST

Another dinner speaker, Auxiliary Bishop Philip M. Hannan of Washington, representing Archbishop O'Boyle an enthusiastic supporter of the Conference, stressed the necessity of making inquirers feel thoroughly at home within the Catholic Church. "The average American has an image of the Church which often amounts to a caricature. In small things and in large, he frequently misinterprets our aims, methods and spirit" said the bishop.

"It is one of the outstanding merits of priests like yourselves that you try to understand the mentality of non-Catholics, and endeavor to show them that the Catholic Church is in reality the house of their Heavenly Father. Your efforts to make yourselves accessible to them and to render the true nature of the Church and her worship familiar serves as an example to European priests. Many of the approaches you employ to attract our Separated Brethren and techniques for instructing inquirers

have been adopted by your fellow priests in Europe."

Lead off man at the conference was John L. Thomas, S.J., distinguished sociologist, writer and lecturer. His paper: "Cultural Pluralism and the Growth of the Church" described the religious climate from which our inquirers come and the spiritual atmosphere to which they return after reception into the Church. This obviously affects the number of our inquirers and their spiritual attitudes, as well as their religious development and stability after conversion.

"We live in a pluralist society," said Father Thomas, "one in which several large segments of the American people start with a different concept of human nature, with divergent views of the nature and destiny of man. Any religious system should define a man's relationship to the world, to his fellow man and to God his Creator. Starting with a certain image of man, people then arrive at a code of personal behavior and goals for the institutions of their society: the family, economics, politics and the rest.

"When we witness in contemporary America a widespread growth in the acceptance of practices like birth control, divorce and abortion, it signifies that many of our fellow citizens have revised their view of the nature of man.

"Religion for many Americans has become a vehicle mainly for civic and social solidarity and a convenient shock absorber for the trials of life: personal tragedy, sickness and death. But it is not the agency from which men derive their basic interpretation of the meaning of life. It is here that apostolic Catholics like yourselves will increasingly find the basic area of disagreement between the Church and other groups in our pluralist society."

From the particular difficulties faced by apostles in American society, the conference then turned to the larger issues raised by Pope John XXIII in his plans for the coming Ecumenical Council. Father John Sheerin, C.S.P., noted editor of *The Catholic World*, delivered a paper on "Catholics and Ecumenism." His approach to this subject was of particular interest because Father Sheerin, along with Father Gustave Weigel, S.J., was unofficial Catholic observer to the Faith and Order Conference of the World Council of Churches which met at Oberlin, Ohio in September of 1957.

"The prospects for amiable and fruitful dialogue between Roman Catholics and the Orthodox are brighter than they have been for centuries," stated Father Sheerin. "The pope himself is well liked by the Orthodox clergy, having had numerous and varied contacts with him for twenty years as Apostolic Delegate and visitor in Bulgaria, Turkey and Greece." Over and above the grave theological and psychological differences that divide East and West, "both sides have been shouting arguments at each other fruitlessly for many bitter years. There was no real dialogue, no real exchange of views. Each side had a different approach.

"Today, however, Roman Catholics and Orthodox thinkers are coming closer to each other in their theological approach, in their prevailing image of the Church. Once the Orthodox regarded church unity as a sacramental and mystic bond while many Roman Catholics stressed the institutional and juridical aspects of the Church. The gulf between their views seems to be narrowing. Orthodox scholars now realize that they cannot lean on governments for institutional protection. And many Roman Catholics today have a more vivid realization of the Church as Christ's Mystical Body.

"When we consider the position of Protestants, a curious situation confronts us. While Protestants are abandoning a great many individual Christian doctrines, at the same time many of their distinguished theologians are approaching more closely the traditional Catholic idea of the Church. The old Protestant idea of an invisible Church of Christ is rapidly losing respectability in Protestant ranks. True, there is very little agreement on just how much organization and how much agreement in doctrine are needed, but it is a huge step forward for Protestants to think of the Church as necessarily a visible church."

THE WHAT AND HOW OF INSTRUCTING

No single question engages leading convert-makers in the United States so much as catechetics. Spurred by the recent emphasis on lay participation in the Mass, by a revival of Scriptural studies and echoes of the catechetical advance in Europe and the missions, American priests have been increasingly concerned about the *what* and the *how* of instructing converts. To place this whole subject in proper perspective,

More priests now regard winning converts as one of the ordinary duties of the priesthood.

Father Gerard Sloyan, director of Religious Education at the Catholic University of America, delivered a paper on "Teaching Catechism: Past and Present." It was one of the most thoughtful addresses during the conference and will be closely studied when the full text is made available in *GUIDE*.

Father Sloyan reviewed the significant historical stages in handing on the Christian message both to Catholics and to our catechumens. From the preaching of St. Peter after Pentecost, the golden era of the catechumenate, through the Middle Ages, Reformation times up to Deharbe's catechism and our present texts, Father Sloyan indicated that catechetics has certainly had its ups and downs. Scholarly, moderate, thoroughly conversant with European trends and with the religious situation in our country, he clearly indicated that we have reason to scrutinize our present catechetical practice. Most of his listeners will hurry to secure a copy of "*Shaping the Christian Message*" where Father Sloyan and a team of American and European scholars treat the present catechetical revival in 13 illuminating chapters.

RECENT ADVANCES

Priests at the conference were able to hear Father James Killgallon, co-author with Father Gerard Weber of *Life in Christ*, a striking successful new catechism which incorporates the latest insights in catechetics. Father Killgallon acted as discussion leader following Father Sloyan and explained how he and Father Weber came to write their new catechism.

It would be difficult to find a single priest who has contributed more toward the advance of the apostolate to non-Catholics in the United States than Father John A. O'Brien. And he was warmly received when it came his turn to discuss the subject: "Significant Developments in Convert-Work." It probably came as something of a surprise to the younger priests that active interest in winning converts was something of a rarity when Father O'Brien compiled his symposium "*The White Harvest*" in 1927. The American clergy, burdened with

the unending task of building churches and schools and caring for the children of the immigrant, had little training or leisure for approaching non-Catholics.

Yet even then there were priests here and there who were winning 100 converts a year. And it was Father O'Brien's ambition to arouse an awareness of the ripeness of the harvest along with imparting a knowledge of the best methods to be employed. As he reviewed the growth of the apostolate, it was evident to older listeners how much of the development was due to Father O'Brien's persevering zeal, dedicated lecturing and writing, and appreciation of the need of good methods.

"Probably the most significant of the many developments in convert work I have witnessed in over forty years," the speaker remarked, "is the fact that priests in large numbers are more apt to regard this apostolate as one of the ordinary duties of their priesthood. Once, for a variety of reasons, they were more conscious of the 'fold' than of the 'fields.'" When I saw at the exhibit prepared by the Paulist students how inquiry classes have multiplied throughout the country, I could not help but remember the time when such classes were once very few and exceedingly far between."

Genial and capable Monsignor William Awalt was discussion leader following Father O'Brien. Although occupied with duties at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington and with obligations at the Chancery, he continues to conduct an inquiry class. His remarks, especially with regard to variations and local adaptations of approved methods, inspired numerous discussions during the private sessions of the delegates.

Probably one of the most engaging and informative of the public sessions was a panel discussion on "Types of Inquirers," by three Paulists. Father William Manning, director of the Information Center at Grand Rapids, Michigan, spoke on the "Un-churched." Father John Keating, author of "*Outlines of Catholic Teaching*," now stationed at Ohio State Catholic Center in Columbus, discussed "The Protestant." Rounding out the panel's remarks was Father James Lloyd, director of the Paulist

Information Center in New York City, who treated the topic "The Jew."

No experienced convert-maker is ever guilty of the mistake of placing inquirers into fixed categories. God does not deal with any two souls in exactly the same way. Our catechumens vary by reason of education, social standing, hereditary traits, and personal religious history. But there are similarities between classes of people who approach the Church and, within limits, it is possible to detect certain common difficulties that constantly crop up which enable us to make rough classifications. The panelists, out of their extensive experience, were able to suggest sound principles in dealing with the variety of inquirers who seek our assistance.

AT WAR FOR SOULS

The only layman was Mr. Frank Sheed, author, publisher, lecturer, apostle, with a doctorate in Theology from Rome. Like many of the senior members of the conference, he has been actively engaged in the apostolate for over thirty years, and is still in charge of the training of speakers for the Evidence Guild in London. Mr. Sheed addressed the conference on the subject "A Layman Looks at Convert-Making."

"We are at war for souls," remarked Mr. Sheed. "It is being waged not primarily to extend the frontiers of the Church, but to bring souls into union with Christ. It is a curious kind of war. We fight *for* the enemy, not against him. We seek not to overwhelm or defeat him but to convert and enrich him.

"Our principal weapon is Truth. The great mass of men do not know why they are alive. They desperately need to be shown the truths about God, the world of the spirit, especially the truth about Christ our Lord. But we live in a noisy world. Great popes, zealous bishops, learned preachers and writers teach the truth. But they reach only relatively small circles of people.

"There is only one voice that can be easily heard, the voice of a man speaking to his friend—speaking to the man next door, the man he works with, plays with, travels with. That voice alone can secure a hearing. Therefore, it is upon that voice that the winning of the war in our time and place depends. The laity must convey the

Christian message one by one, to non-Catholics one by one. The daily, hourly battle in this war is only possible if each Catholic layman is equipped to lead toward the truth the people he personally meets."

Discussion leader after Mr. Sheed's talk was Father George Hagmaier, C.S.P. He is the first priest to receive a doctorate in Counselling from Columbia University in New York, and his book "Counselling the Catholic" has just been published by Sheed & Ward. A personal friend of Mr. Sheed and helpful collaborator in all that pertains to the conference, he initiated discussion in one of the most lively of the sessions at the convention.

TO INTEREST OTHER PRIESTS

The aim of the conference was not merely to improve the quality of our priestly contribution to the apostolate but to extend its influence among our brother priests. Hence it was appropriate that the final session be devoted to the topic "Interesting Priests in Winning Converts." It took the form of a panel discussion with four priests who represented dioceses where the Church is particularly active in this work. Panelists included Monsignor Charles Walsh of New York City, and Fathers Patrick Malloy of St. Louis, William Quinlan of Chicago and John O'Connor of Brooklyn.

These priests probably represented as great an experience, knowledge and dedication to the Church's apostolate for Christ's other sheep as could be assembled on one platform. They reported on the extent of what was being done to win converts in their respective dioceses. They discussed the degree and manner in which the work is organized and the parochial procedures recommended. Of special interest to the delegates was the variety of means employed to spread the apostolate in seminaries, convents, educational institutions, and through the diocesan office of the CCD.

All in all, the conference was immensely stimulating and informing. It was clear that we have a long way to go before we engage the full strength of American Catholics in the cause of Christ's other sheep. Nevertheless, a sturdy movement is under way and it gathers strength every day. It was good to meet with some of the priests whose zeal and devotion keeps the apostolate moving ever forward.

Towards Organizing the Convert Apostolate

During the conference described in the foregoing article, certain reports and announcements were made that will be of considerable interest to readers of *Guide*. Press of time during the sessions of the convention required that they be brief. It is now possible to explain them at greater length.

Four matters especially deserve closer attention because of their bearing on the vitality of our apostolate. 1. A form of organization to advance the objectives of the apostolate. 2. Future meetings of the National Conference on Convert Work. 3. The convention on convert work to be held in 1960 under the auspices of the priests of Chicago. 4. The Institute now being launched by the Paulist Fathers.

Quite early at last year's conference the attending priests discussed, during their private conversations, the need of organization to co-ordinate and promote the apostolate to non-Catholics in our country. The conference had been sponsored by the Paulists on the occasion of their Centenary to focus renewed attention on the apostolate. But it resulted in an unexpected ground swell for united planning and concerted effort on a national scale. Alive to the spontaneity, urgency and sincerity of this desire, the Paulists were equally aware of the hazards of precipitancy. We felt that so momentous a decision required time, investigation and consultation with priests who were unable to attend the conference.

As a consequence, Father Michell our Superior General authorized Father Mitchell as chairman of the conference, to announce that the Paulists would definitely hold a second national conference in 1959. Meanwhile, the present writer, as secretary of the conference, was asked to study the question of a form of organization to further the aims of the apostolate and to report on the matter at the conference in 1959.

During the past year, I solicited expressions of opinion among readers of *Techniques for Convert Makers*. And by travel,

numerous interviews and considerable correspondence, I endeavored to ascertain the opinion of those in the know. Those who recall the long road that finally led to the organizing of our other large apostolates will realize the delicacy and difficulties connected with the task. And they will not be surprised if no single, simple, last-word answer can be given at the moment. But the year has brought greater clarity on many aspects of the question and produced tangible developments that will assuredly add vigor to our apostolate.

While thoroughly agreed on the necessity of organized effort to spur apostolic activity for converts, relatively few priests were specific as to just how this wish was to be implemented. Of those who did express a definite opinion, most of them pointed to the merits of the Apostolate of Good Will of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. Speaking for myself, I would respectfully suggest that this channel can offer many of the advantages so much desired by thoughtful priests in the movement. It is an opinion that I have frequently expressed for the past decade.

I take it that our over-riding concern is for the conversion of this nation to the Catholic Church. This is quite literally a staggering task. It is both a privilege and an obligation that must be shared by every Catholic in the land. The prayers, intelligence and charitable zeal of each individual priest and layman will be needed for its accomplishment. And it obviously will require many different kinds of association for a variety of tasks, and at different levels. No single organization, in view of the dimensions and complexity of our responsibility, could possibly carry the ball alone. But there are many reasons why the role of the CCD should be given particular consideration at this stage of our thinking.

It will be remembered that the Confraternity derives from the catechetical associations of Italy in the 16th century. Its ad-

vocates were among the great saints and apostles of the Counter-Reformation era. St. Pius X revived it in 1905 and placed it at the core of his plan to "Restore all things to Christ." He decreed that it be established in every parish of the world (Canon 711:2). And succeeding Pontiffs have repeatedly urged its necessity in an age so tragically ignorant of the Gospel.

In 1935, the National Center of the CCD in the United States was officially established as a bureau of the NCWC in Washington. And the late Archbishop O'Hara as its Episcopal Chairman shaped the Confraternity to the peculiar needs of our country. As bishop of Kansas City, he had already incorporated in his diocesan Confraternity an Apostolate of Good Will for the instruction of non-Catholics. It was understandable that through his influence this apostolate should later be officially designated as one of the basic activities of the CCD as it functions within our country.

A VITAL FORCE

During the last three decades, the Confraternity has become a vital force in American Catholicism. It's National Center at the NCWC in Washington is under episcopal direction. Staffed by professional personnel, it serves as a clearing house for information pertaining to the teaching of Christian Doctrine. It issues its own periodical, sponsors a department of publications and a staff of field workers. National Congresses are held every five years; and it has undertaken seven regional congresses this fall. At present 25 of our 26 archdioceses and 107 of our 113 dioceses have appointed priest-directors. And this impressive array is at the service of the parishes of the country for their catechetical needs—including the instruction of non-Catholics.

With the growing recognition of our apostolic duty toward our Separated Brethren, the Apostolate of Good Will has taken on increasing prominence in numerous dioceses. The late Cardinal Stritch placed the Chicago convert apostolate, now numbering some 200 inquiry classes, under the direction of the CCD. In New York, within a decade, the Confraternity has established a network of information classes throughout the archdiocese. In the last report of Newark's Confraternity, 58 parish information classes are listed. And this fall, Pat-

erson's CCD helped to inaugurate 22 classes for inquirers. This year, in the archdiocese of Washington, the Confraternity is conducting seven seminars on convert work for the priests of the area.

Those who attended the National Congresses of the CCD in Chicago, Boston and Buffalo will recall the marked emphasis placed on the Apostolate of Good Will. And the recent regional congress at Portland, Oregon, indicates what can be done when there is zeal for conversions and co-operation on the local level.

My justification for dwelling on the matter at some length is that much of this is not generally realized. Any consideration of the question of organizing for the advancement of convert work must take these realities into account. The present actual commitment of the Confraternity to our apostolate, and its effectiveness, is impressive and ever growing. Its potential contribution—in view of its credentials, aims and manifold resources—is enormous.

To be sure, there are individuals, affiliated groups and organizations of long standing that make a major contribution toward America's conversion. Many of them were ably represented at the last two conventions in Washington and without them our apostolate would be lame and enfeebled. Each has won a secure niche for itself by long, hard work and substantial results.

There is every reason to expect that they retain their identity, flourish more vigorously and render an ever-increasing service to the apostolate. It will take time and a variety of means, old and new, to mobilize fully the latent powers of Catholicism in America for its apostolic duties. But prayer, generous collaboration and renewed zeal will surely win for us the grace to achieve this objective.

Father William Michell and his Council authorized the secretary of the conference to announce that the Paulists would definitely hold another conference sometime in 1961. It will be held at St. Paul's College in Washington and will gather priests from all over the country to represent their dioceses or religious communities. The enthusiastic reception given to the two previous meetings, and the solid gains achieved, persuaded our Superior General to plan to hold similar conventions at least every two years.

It required no prolonged study on the

The apostolate to non-Catholics must become a popular movement and also achieve greater depth.

part of our superiors to decide to continue these conferences in Washington. It was obvious that many priests were intensely eager to meet with others who desired to improve and to advance the apostolate. Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of these meetings was the emphatic assurance of our guests that the gatherings were an answer to a long felt need. Everyone who attended was already up to his neck in work and had to make considerable sacrifices to be present. That they cheerfully made these sacrifices was ample confirmation that the meetings were worth while.

CONFERENCE TO CONTINUE

Having opened a door to some of the immense possibilities in convert work, the Paulists have no intention of closing it. Playing host to these conventions has been a source of enormous satisfaction to our entire Community. Although individual priests regarded it as a privilege to meet and exchange experiences with like-minded confreres, the Paulists were repaid beyond measure in having been able to bring them together.

Our decision to skip a year before convening the next conference in 1961 was partly motivated by the fact that the priests of Chicago will sponsor a convention on convert work next year. But even aside from this, we felt that a meeting at St. Paul's every two years might best serve the purposes of the apostolate. It was our considered opinion that, in time, an annual meeting might prove to be rather difficult for men who are exceedingly busy. If we were mistaken in this judgment, however, please let us know. But I should like to make it quite clear that the Paulists suffered no strain whatsoever in arranging these conferences. Any slight effort on our part was rewarded beyond our expectations.

It was our hope, in planning the initial conference, that it would inspire workshops, seminars and meetings of priests on the convert apostolate in many areas of the country. And this hope was justified in the numerous gatherings of priests for this purpose held since October, 1958. So it was

especially good news indeed to learn, in conversation some months ago with Fathers Killgallon and Weber, that the priests of the archdiocese of Chicago planned to hold a convention on convert work in 1960.

Father Weber, at one of the sessions in Washington, announced that the convention in Chicago would be national in scope and would entail invitations to as many as three hundred priests. It is to be held at the Sherman Hotel. On the program will be Bishop Fulton Sheen, Father Gustave Weigel, S.J., and an extensive series of workshops will cover the hundred and one details of winning converts. Emphasis will be placed on the practical needs of the average priest in a typical parish. It is scheduled to take place May 30—June 1.

Being so centrally located makes Chicago an ideal city for a convention. I am confident that this feature, along with the seasoned experience and extensive know-how of those planning the convention, will make the Chicago convention a major event in the convert apostolate. There is every reason to believe that it will carry the work forward by many huge strides.

After considerable planning and discussion over a period of years, the Paulists were able to announce at the conference the formation of an Institute within the Community. It will undertake research in the principles underlying our many-sided apostolate and will test their validity in our various missionary activities. Its conclusions and informed recommendations will be made available to all engaged in the field of convert work. Father John Mitchell, assisted by Fathers George Hagmaier and the writer, have been appointed to its staff. And *Guide* will serve as its official publication.

In addition to those priests already qualified by graduate studies or long practical experience, student-priests are already engaged in higher studies for the purposes of the Institute. One has completed a year's study with the famous missiologist Dr. Ohm in Germany and is now working for a degree in Missiology in Rome. Another is now in the second year of his studies with a view to a doctorate in Religious Sociology,

while a third priest has joined him in the same field. A fourth priest is studying at the Lumen Vitae Center of Catechetics in Brussels. A fifth is now pursuing studies for his doctorate in the field of Protestant-Catholic Dialogue.

A long-range program of graduate studies, under the direction of Father Benjamin Hunt, will gradually provide the Institute with priests adequately trained in many of the other disciplines so vitally necessary if our apostolate is to have the depth it deserves. Special fields in which we trust to train capable priests include: The Psychology of Belief and Unbelief; Religious Education; The Theology of Conversion; Religious Thought in America; Religious Tolerance; Religious Tensions and similar subjects.

The apostolate to non-Catholics has many needs. It certainly should become a more popular movement, engaging the vital interest of the entire body of American Catholicism. It must find a place in novitiates, seminaries, in Catholic education at every level and thus become a part of the thinking and practice of every Catholic.

But if it needs wider recognition and co-operation, it also requires greater depth. Our apostolate was never served well wherever it depended merely on well-meaning enthusiasm. It scarcely needs to be said that it is God's grace that ultimately wins converts. But God does invite our co-operation in preparing souls for faith. The highest competence will never of itself enable us to bestow the gift of faith. But our ineptitude can and frequently does stall the advance of well-disposed inquirers.

The missionary saints were obviously the greatest of convert-makers. We do find in them imagination, sanctity, courage and self-sacrifice. But they had previously mastered the theoretical elements of their work. They were deeply concerned with strategy and tactics, and a preoccupation with the facts and principles that make for good mission methods. Half the fascination in reading of the accomplishments of St. Paul, Patrick or Boniface is the sound reasons for the approaches they employed so successfully.

It is understandable that priests, faced with endless parochial duties, will be more concerned with immediate practical solutions to their problems than in theory or research. Yet good practice, in convert work

GUIDE

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GUIDE

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as in everything else, depends on sound theory. When a physician treats a patient it is desirable that he bring a pleasant bedside manner, confidence and good intentions. But the very life of his patient may depend on whether or not the physician keeps abreast of the latest findings of the medical research foundations. Many of us are alive today because some doctor made time to read his favorite medical journal.

The Paulists are in a particularly favorable position to undertake the combined theoretical and practical aims of the Institute. In addition to gathering the latest conclusions and facts relating to our apostolate and provided by Catholic scholars and experts here and abroad, the Paulists enjoy special opportunities for testing these findings as they apply to the needs of the Church in America. Our foundations are located in every section of our country. They include parishes of every type and description. In addition, we have information centers, mission bands, Newman Clubs and a wide variety of publications. Our community does not have unlimited resources, but within the range of our capacity we trust to make the Institute a substantial factor at the service of the apostolate.

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

Guide Lights

SEMINARIANS . . .

Study groups in seminaries may now rent all five tapes containing the principal talks and discussions delivered at the 1958 Conference on Convert Work in Washington. Speakers included Fathers Gustave Weigel, Frank Stone, C.S.P., Edward McLean, Gerard Weber, John T. McGinn, C.S.P., Monsignors Leonard B. Nienaber and Charles J. McManus. The five tapes may be rented for the period of one month for \$1.00 plus postage. Write John T. McGinn, C.S.P., National Conference on Convert Work, St. Paul's College, Washington 17, D. C.

BOUQUETS . . .

Father Clement F. Borchers, a good friend of the National Conference on Convert Work, has been re-elected to another six year term as Superior General of the Glenmary Home Missioners. . . .

Monsignor Corbett, CCD Director in Washington, and Monsignor Awalt, along with a committee of local priests, are conducting a series of seven seminars on convert work for the priests of the archdiocese. . . .

In a pastoral letter announcing the beginning of the sixth annual information forum program in St. Louis, Archbishop Ritter reported that more than 5,000 converts have come to the Church in a five year period. A series of Holy Hours at the Cathedral inaugurates the fall series, and laymen make personal calls on non-Catholics inviting them to the courses held in each parish. "They are intended," said Archbishop Ritter to the laity, "to be an opportunity for you to fulfill your vocation to the apostles for Christ, to consider whom you might invite to attend the forum, and to pray for conversions. . . ."

A series of inquiry classes conducted by laymen for adults is underway in St. Mary's parish at Eugene, Oregon, with sessions held in the library room of St. Francis High School. Dale Cooley, an advertising executive and member of St. Francis faculty, conducted the first class Oct. 13th. November classes are being conducted under the direction of District Judge Edward J. Leavy and Joseph Gurdwin Kwarhus. Eugene businessmen will have charge of the December sessions. Robert Hammel, faculty member

at the Eugene public high school, will conduct the January classes. The classes will continue approximately twenty weeks. . . .

Father Frank Stone, C.S.P., has been placed in charge of the Ontario Catholic Hour. After thorough preparation with the help of a lay committee, a period of discussion on the World of Religion has been added to the program. This will offer a medium of expression on the best Catholic thought on the widest possible range of topics. The committee, assisted by instructors from the Canadian Broadcasting Company, offered a three-part course in broadcasting techniques. Priests of the area were invited to study the details of radio writing, speaking and the possibilities of the medium for the cause of religion.

A PROTESTANT VIEW OF CONVERSIONS . . .

"Why Protestants Become Catholics" is the title of an article by Russell O. Berg in the October issue of the *Christian Herald* edited by Daniel Poling. The author made a study of the autobiographies of one hundred converts to Catholicism. "We are losing too many members to Catholicism," he concluded. To read these accounts is to be convinced, says Mr. Berg, "that there are many Christians who will never be happy anywhere except in the Catholic Church." The divisions in Protestantism bothered at least thirty of those studied. The need for a central authority to say what is right and wrong was emphasized by twenty-two of these converts. More than one third indicated that the anti-Catholic animus in their own households made them look to the claims of the Catholic Church. Other strong factors in these conversions were the "joyousness," "naturalness," "warmth," of Catholics as against the cold Puritan atmosphere among Protestants.

CATHOLICS AND LUTHERANS . . .

The Catholic Church is much further advanced in its study of Protestant theology than are Protestants in their study of Catholicism, a member of a special Lutheran World Federation research commission said at Newport, R. I. That is one reason for the establishment by the LWF of its Institute for Inter-Confessional Research, said Dr. George A. Lindbeck, assistant professor of medieval thought at Yale Divinity School,

New Haven, Conn. He addressed the annual conference of New England's Augustana Lutheran pastors.

The institute, which will begin work in January, came into being because changed relations between Catholicism and Lutheranism, particularly in Germany and France, have made new studies desirable, Dr. Lindbeck said. Among other reasons for its foundation, he said, is a Lutheran conviction that "we and Catholics are in fact one in Christ," that Catholics are "brethren in Christ from whom we are painfully separated." Dr. Lindbeck pointed out that Catholic theologians some years ago set up an institute at Paderbon, Germany, to study Protestantism and that more recently they established another in France to study Eastern Orthodoxy.

"The best books on contemporary Protestant theology now are written by Catholics," he added, citing three books by Catholic writers on Swiss theologian Karl Barth and two on Rudolf Bultmann, a German theologian. Of the Protestants now making a study of Catholicism, the three furthest advanced, he said, are Lutherans. "But none of them have written very much, and none writes with the feeling of Catholicism from within that characterizes the work of Catholics on Protestant theology," he said. "You would think they (the Catholics) were Protestants—they so thoroughly understand Protestant theology," he said.

LITURGY AND THE MISSIONS . . .

Further information has been made public regarding the International Study Week on Missions and Liturgy held at Nijmegen, Holland, September 12-19. Thirty-seven bishops from mission lands and nearly one hundred priests from Africa, India and the Far East participated. A score of European specialists in Liturgy were present. They met under the presidency of Cardinal Gracias of Bombay, whose stirring address opened the meetings. Once again we are indebted to Father Clifford Howell, S.J., who discusses the event in *The Catholic Herald*:—

The fact that so many had come such enormous distances to take part in the congress was proof of the importance they attached to its subject—liturgy in the missions. One speaker after another made it clear that the missionaries of today are filled with a sense of urgency concerning their task of planting the Church and enabling her to grow deep roots in lands where the Good Tidings of our redemption by Christ have, as yet, hardly been heard.

Searching for every possible means to further Christ's cause, the missionaries have

come to the conclusion that a full and effective use of the Church's liturgy is indispensable. Christian communities must be built up primarily about the altar, instructed, held together and living by the liturgy.

In many countries, said Archbishop Melckebeke, Apostolic Visitor of Singapore school legislation makes religious instruction through the schools ever more and more precarious. Therefore an urgent effort is required to make the best use of the liturgy as a means of instruction and education. . . . A clear, well understood, living and lived liturgy is a resource which the clergy must exploit.

Only those conclusions which were absolutely or virtually unanimous are contained in the report which by now, will have been received by Propaganda; but Cardinal Gracias hopes to be received in audience by the Holy Father this month, and will give him as full an account as possible, even of the minority views, of what the missionaries assembled at Nijmegen think and hope for the future of their work.

A few of the more important conclusions are as follows: The missionaries are agreed that it would help their apostolate

(a) if at all Sung Masses the people were allowed to sing *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei* in their own language;

(b) if the Proper of the Mass could be sung in the vernacular, at least in paraphrase;

(c) if the Scripture readings at all Masses could be proclaimed to the people by the sacred minister concerned (subdeacon and deacon at Sung Mass, priest at Low Mass), facing the people, immediately, in their own language;

(d) if the number of Scripture passages for Sundays and the greater feasts could be better selected and greatly increased so as to constitute a cycle of, say, four years;

(e) if the celebrant of a Sung Mass could discontinue the reading of all parts of the Mass sung by the sacred ministers or their choir, thus avoiding repetition;

(f) if certain ceremonies at present restricted to the Solemn Mass could be used at Sung Mass and at Low Mass on particular occasions;

(g) if considerable liberty were given to the missionary bishops to adapt the ritual, preserving the essentials for validity, to the culture and customs of their respective dioceses;

(h) if the bishops could transfer certain liturgical ceremonies, such as those of Rogation Days, to dates suited to the way of life and climate of their people.